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TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES THROUGH DRAMA

by

Colin Anderson

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

in

**Theatre Education
in the Department of Theatre Arts**

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SOCIAL STUDIES ENHANCEMENT THROUGH DRAMA

Educators and researchers have long discussed methods for improving student achievement in the social studies and history. Research on student attitudes reveals that the social studies suffers from a lack of interest among students. Common complaints among students are that the subject is tedious, does not relate to their lives, is not particularly useful for their future careers, is repetitive, or that it is simply boring (Schug et al., 1982). Even when students recognize the utilitarian value of skills they learn from social studies / history, they rarely express an interest in the subject (Chiodo, 2004). After reviewing the body of literature on student attitudes towards the social studies, Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1985) concluded, "most students in the United States, at all grade levels, find social studies to be one of the least interesting, most irrelevant subjects in the school curriculum" (p. 694). Russel and Waters (2010) linked these attitudes to the prevalence of passive learning (lecture, worksheets and other busy work, and rote memorization) within contemporary social studies classrooms.

Studies examining social studies / history education suggest that pedagogical techniques from drama / theatre may be effective at teaching these subjects by helping students actively engage with and retain material. Drama-based strategies can be particularly effective in improving student reading skills (Rose et al., 2000). By strengthening such basic skills, drama / theatre helps support student achievement in social studies / history. Teaching strategies that utilize historical narrative have been shown to get students to effectively engage with and improve their understanding of social studies content (Downey et al., 1991; Brophy et al., 1991). Drama can act as a form of historical narrative and be particularly effective at reaching students (Otten et al., 2004; Jackson et al., 2005). Drama-integration methods also complement the social studies curriculum by being well suited for multicultural education practices, cross-curricular learning, and the investigation of social justice issues (Gay & Hanley, 1999; Fautely & Savage, 2011; Lement & Dunakin, 2005).

Morris (2001) asserts that drama-integration in the social studies classroom leads to both increased student engagement and performance on assessment. Pre-service teachers taught to incorporate the performing arts into their social studies classrooms echo this belief (Colley, 2012). Studies at the elementary level have shown evidence of a positive impact on student achievement. Fifth grade students at one elementary school who participated in a series of historical musicals demonstrated both higher levels of history knowledge and more positive feelings towards the subject than their peers when retested in the sixth grade (Otten et al., 2004). Walker et al. (2011) observed that students in fourth and fifth grade language arts and social studies classrooms who received twenty drama-integrated lessons during the school year performed significantly higher on proficiency exams and were more inclined to hold positive beliefs about the arts when compared to students in traditional classrooms. The effect is seen even on assessments at the state level, as students exposed to an arts-integrated curriculum (including drama / theatre) exhibited a stronger performance on the Ohio Fourth-Grade Proficiency Test in the areas of math, science, and citizenship (social studies) (Kinney & Forsythe, 2005).

RATIONALE & SIGNIFICANCE

Despite extensive literature suggesting the potential efficacy of drama / theatre integration, few studies have assessed the direct impact of this pedagogical approach on student achievement in social studies / history classrooms. Many authors (including Ball & Airs, 1995; Fautely & Savage, 2011; Fennessey, 2000; and Pieczura, 2013) advocate the use of drama / theatre techniques in the social studies classroom in order to enhance student motivation and achievement, but provide little to no evidence from real-world classrooms. Additionally, much of the literature focuses around theoretical discussions of drama / theatre techniques that teachers could potentially employ. Creative drama techniques such as

improvisation, role-play, writing in role, tableaux, Mantle of the Expert, and historically themed melodramas have all been put forward as effective teaching tools in teaching social studies / history (McCaslin, 2006; Heathcote & Bolton, 1995; Johnson et al., 2015; and Obenchain & Morris, 2001). The majority of these authors, however, provide only anecdotal evidence to support these ideas. Documentation of practice reports (including Barnes et al., 2010; Gray, 2003; Morris, 2001; Rosler, 2008; and Schuchat, 2005) regularly speak to enhancements in student achievement, engagement, and attitudes, yet these reports lack experimental data with which to demonstrate the direct impact of the drama / theatre integration.

The impact of drama / theatre integration within secondary social studies / history classrooms is under-researched. Documentation of work with elementary students dominates the scholarly discussion. While a few authors discuss secondary education [Gray (2003) describes a process drama in a high school classroom and Schuchat (2005) integrated eighth grade social studies, English, and technology], most studies focus on students at the elementary level. Additionally, all studies we could locate that included results of experiments (Kinney & Forsythe, 2005; Otten et al., 2004; and Walker et al., 2011) tested the impact of drama / theatre integration on students in the fourth or fifth grade.

This study sought to help fill this gap in the literature by investigating the possible effects of drama-based pedagogy on the learning of secondary school students. Specifically, the study sought to determine if teaching a unit of a World Civilizations class through drama-based instruction would lead to increased student engagement and achievement.

METHODS

The primary research question for this study was: does teaching a unit of a World Civilizations class through drama-based instruction lead to increased student engagement and achievement? To this end, the researchers partnered with a secondary school history teacher to develop a drama-enhanced unit plan that became part of a ninth-grade World Civilizations curriculum. Specifically, the unit considered the Protestant Reformation. One section of the course was designated as a control group and was taught by the collaborating teacher using her normal methods, which included lecture, group discussion, primary source analysis, and written worksheets. Two other class sections were designated as intervention groups. In these classes the researchers implemented the unit-plan and drama-based strategies described herein. All told, fifty-one students participated in the study, distributed roughly evenly among the three classes.

To assess the students' content knowledge, working with the classroom teacher the researchers developed both a pre- and a post-test that covered a variety of concepts relating to the Protestant Reformation. The pre-test consisted of nine multiple choice questions assessing knowledge of figures, events, and religious controversies of the Reformation (e.g. Martin Luther, the Edict of Worms, and the practice of issuing indulgences). The post-test consisted of thirty questions in matching, multiple choice, and short answer formats assessing the same concepts. (For a complete list of pre- and post-test questions, see Appendix I and Appendix II) All three class sections received the pre- and post-tests on the same day. Two members of the research team subsequently graded every test independently to ensure consistency of scoring and the accuracy of the recorded data.

An extensive search of the literature did not reveal any reliable, valid published instrument for assessing student interest and motivation in social studies classes. As such, this study used an adaptation of the Science Motivation Questionnaire II (SMQ II), developed by Glynn et al, (2011), which assesses intrinsic

and extrinsic motivation toward learning various subjects. Because the manifest variables in the SMQ are not directly related to science (in fact, the authors note that the word "science" in each statement can be replaced by another subject), the instrument was pragmatically the best way to assess student motivation in this subject given the impossibility of independently developing a valid and reliable instrument. The reliability of the SMQ II is established by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 (1168). All three sections of World Civilizations participating in this study completed a pre- and a post-SMQ II alongside the content pre- and post-tests.

THE DRAMA-ENHANCED SESSION

This narrative describes the specific content of the lesson and then identifies in parentheses the drama strategies employed; all citations in this section are from Neelands & Goode (2000).

The first day of the unit focused on teaching students about the core beliefs of Christianity, particularly those of Roman Catholicism that became controversial during the Protestant Reformation. The day began by introducing the students to drama conventions (e.g., suspension of disbelief) to encourage participation. This was followed by a name game that involved elements of memorization and miming that was intended to ease students into dramatic work. The lesson proper consisted of one facilitator remaining as the classroom teacher while the other took on the role of a tour guide from the Vatican museums (i.e., using a teacher-in-role convention, 40). The students learned about the beliefs held by the medieval Catholic church by examining various works of art (artifact exploration), explained by the "tour guide." The students then devised tableaux depicting the concepts introduced during the tour (i.e., use of still-image, 25). The first day concluded with an introduction to in-character work by having the students write journal entries from the perspective of medieval Europeans reflecting on the state of the pre-Reformation church (writing-in-role, 16).

The second day of the unit saw the introduction of the Reformation proper and the beginning of more intensive drama work. The lesson began with an introduction to character development work. Students were guided through the process of creating a persona as a citizen of Wittenberg, Saxony by answering questions such as the characters' name, profession, family life, and religious views. They then improvised as these characters for the remainder of the day (students-in-role). Soon after, both facilitators took on roles: the first represented Johann Tetzel (a German monk selling indulgences), the second represented Martin Luther (the author of the Ninety-Five Theses who criticized the practice of selling indulgences). In role, the teachers debated the practices of the Catholic Church. Students were invited to participate in the debate by asking the two characters questions about their positions (i.e., the use of hot-seating, 32). After debating for a time, the facilitators passed out excerpts of the Ninety-Five Theses for the students to analyze and discuss in role as the characters they had created.

The third day of the unit covered the spread of Lutheranism and the German wars of religion. The students assumed roles as German citizens; half of the students played characters who practiced Lutheranism while the other half represented characters practicing Catholicism. They developed characters using the circle of life technique, in which they determined each characters' personal lives, feelings about their own and other peoples' religious beliefs, and what they were afraid of in terms of the religious conflict between the two groups (circle-of-life, 10; students-in-role). One of the facilitators took on the role of a messenger delivering news of political developments across the German states. The students reacted to the passage of the Edict of Worms by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V by creating a graffiti wall (taking turns writing their characters' views about the emperor on a large piece of chart paper next to a portrait of the emperor) before the messenger again appeared with news of the Peace of Augsburg. Still in role as German citizens, the students debated whether to petition the local

German prince to adopt Lutheranism or remain Catholic (meetings, 35). After voting on which religion their community wished to follow, the students petitioned the prince to adopt their chosen faith. In both intervention classes the students voted in favor of Lutheranism.

The fourth day of the unit covered the spread of the Reformation beyond Germany. The students – in role as employees of a print shop – were introduced to the facilitators in the roles of print shop owners (students-in-role, teachers-in-role). The “employees” received an orientation about the history of the printing press before writing their own news stories about John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, Henry VIII, and the Anabaptist movement. The employees shared their news stories with one another to receive feedback from their coworkers and begin spreading the news they were reporting.

The final day of the unit focused on the Counterreformation. The students were initially introduced to the work of Ignatius de Loyola and the Jesuits by analyzing several of his “personal belongings” (objects of character, 20). Afterwards, the students grouped into pairs representing communities from across Europe and wrote letters to Ignatius either requesting the Jesuits to visit or stay away from their communities (writing-in-role). The day concluded with the students – still in the same roles – attending the Council of Trent and presenting grievances/suggestions to the Pope (meetings).

RESULTS

Prior to the intervention students completed a pre-survey using a modified version of the SMQ II to assess their level of interest in and engagement with social studies and history in general, and also completed a pre-test assessing their knowledge of the content in the specific unit taught (described above). An analysis of variance test (ANOVA) revealed that there were no significant differences between the control and intervention groups in terms of attitudes toward history ($p < 0.62$) or content knowledge about the Reformation ($p < 0.11$) before the unit began. After the unit was completed students completed another SMQ to assess their engagement with history and also completed a test assessing their content knowledge. ANOVA analyses revealed no significant differences between the control and intervention groups with regard to attitudes toward history ($p < 0.34$) or content knowledge ($p < 0.96$). Furthermore, paired samples t-tests found no significant differences between students’ attitudes toward history between the pre- and post-surveys for students in the control group ($p < 0.36$) or intervention group ($p < 0.65$).

DISCUSSION

Initially, it was a disappointment that the intervention groups did not perform better than the control class. Despite assertions that integrating drama-based teaching strategies into social studies content led to improved student achievement in and attitudes towards the subject, experimental results could not verify these claims, at least in this particular instance. Rather, the data seemed to indicate that the intervention had no impact on the students at all. Such results do not lend support to the inclusion of drama within the social studies classroom; however, the data does not demonstrate that drama is ineffective either.

This study faced several potential obstacles to student achievement: The lesson-plan – although vetted by both the project supervisor and the classroom teacher – remained untested in the classroom. The facilitators were all enrolled in a university teacher-training program, but some lacked extensive, firsthand experience working with students. Additionally, the students had no prior relationship with the facilitators, result in an initial lack of authority and trust, which could reduce the efficacy of the lesson (Cangelosi, 2007, p. 60; Freeman, Sullivan, & Fulton, 2003, p. 137) that had to be remedied concurrently with the implementation of the study itself. There is a possibility that teacher effects could have played

a role as well, given that the classes were taught by different instructors (the control group by the classroom teacher, and the intervention group by the researchers). When all is said and done, numerous factors indicated the likelihood of reduced performance in the intervention classes.

That there was no significant difference in student performance between the control and the intervention classes is an encouraging result. At the very least, it demonstrates that using drama-based methods within the high-school social studies classroom does not adversely affect student performance. Furthermore, that the students in the intervention groups performed at the same level as the control group, despite the previously discussed obstacles, may indicate the possibility that drama-based instruction can mitigate factors that otherwise inhibit student performance. This raises the possibility that in the hands of an experienced facilitator with a tested and refined lesson-plan, drama-based techniques could result in outcomes at the high school level as positive as those at the elementary and middle school levels described in the literature.

Observations made by the researchers regarding student engagement also appear to corroborate with the assertions present in the literature. The researchers noted that student participation and enthusiasm began tepidly, but by the second day of the unit both had increased noticeably. In fact, the researchers' reflections indicate that the day-to-day levels of student engagement appeared to correlate with the degree to which drama-based techniques were integrated into each day. For example, the second day of the unit – in which the facilitators spent the class in role as Tetzels and Luther and the students debated the Ninety-Five Theses in role as citizens of Wittenberg – was marked by students eagerly contributing to the discussions with little to no prompting on the part of the facilitators. In contrast, the fourth day of the unit – which consisted primarily of students-in-role writing news articles – was both the least dramatic day of the unit and witnessed substantially lower levels of student engagement. In general, it appeared that the students engaged most readily with activities in which they had the opportunity to engage in the debate of ideas (e.g. the debate of the Ninety-Five Theses described above, the community debate over converting to Lutheranism from the third day, and the appeals to the Council of Trent on the fifth day). Essentially, the students showed the most enthusiasm in circumstances in which applying the content knowledge gave them power over the dramatic narrative. Such observations support other documentations of practice (including Barnes et al., 2010; Gray, 2003; Morris, 2001; Rosler, 2008; and Schuchat, 2005) that report drama-based teaching strategies increase student engagement. Throughout the unit, it became quite clear that the students would rather enact history than talk history.

Researchers also noticed by the end of the unit a subtle change in empathy exhibited by the students. Early on, the students had no problem being critical of the Medieval Catholic Church. They were quick to criticize many of the church's beliefs and practices, and they enthusiastically embraced Martin Luther's condemnations of the church. At this stage, the facilitators found it difficult to get any students to take on the role of an individual loyal to the Catholic Church. In contrast, by the last day of the unit, when given the opportunity to choose the faith of the characters they were creating, the students divided roughly in half between Protestants and loyal Catholics (the distribution of these choices did not correspond with any of the groups created in previous activities). In fact, during our reenactment of the Council of Trent, some of the most detailed and eloquent arguments came from students whose characters were defending practices of the Catholic Church. This evolution on the part of the students may indicate an increase in their ability to empathize with different perspectives.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The observations made during this study are intriguing. As discussed above, the experimental data revealed no significant difference in the attitudes or achievements of students learning history through drama-based strategies as opposed to through traditional methods; however, the results are not conclusive. If no significant difference existed in student achievement when the experimental group learned under sub-optimal conditions, the circumstances suggest that drama-based strategies could indeed be highly effective when implemented through a well-tested lesson plan and by an experienced facilitator with an established relationship with the students. Such a study would replicate many of the conditions that exist within the documentation of practice literature which speak most highly of the efficacy of drama-based teaching strategies.

Another potential avenue of research may be the influence of drama-based strategies on the development of empathy in high school history students. Observations made by the researchers speak to witnessing evidence of meaningful student growth in this area. The ability to understand and work with a variety of perspectives is one of the most valuable skills that social studies courses seek to impart. The possibility that drama-based teaching strategies may be highly suited to developing this skill should be pursued by future studies.

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APPENDIX I

Content-Assessment Questions from the Pre-Test

1. Who wrote the Ninety-Five Theses at the beginning of the Reformation?
 - a. Martin Luther
 - b. John Calvin
 - c. Johannes Gutenberg
 - d. Henry VIII
2. John Calvin and his followers operated primarily out of
 - a. Germany
 - b. France
 - c. Switzerland
 - d. England
3. The invention of moveable-type printing was made by
 - a. Johannes Tetzel
 - b. Johannes Gutenberg
 - c. John Calvin
 - d. Ulrich Zwingli
4. What practice secures a release from all or part of the punishment for sin?
 - a. Justification through Faith
 - b. Predestination
 - c. Transubstantiation
 - d. Indulgences
5. The belief that God had determined in advance who would be saved and who would be damned is called
 - a. Predestination
 - b. Purgatory
 - c. Transubstantiation
 - d. Confirmation
6. Which of the following is one of the Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church?
 - a. Justification through Faith
 - b. Purgatory
 - c. Indulgences
 - d. Penance
7. Which of the following legalized Lutheranism in the Holy Roman Empire?
 - a. Edict of Worms
 - b. Peace of Augsburg
 - c. Council of Trent
 - d. Acts of Supremacy

8. Members of which religious order swore loyalty directly to the Pope?
 - a. Anabaptists
 - b. Calvinists
 - c. Jesuits
 - d. Anglicans

9. The Holy Roman Emperor outlawed the teachings of Martin Luther through the
 - a. Acts of Supremacy
 - b. Edict of Worms
 - c. Ninety-Five Theses
 - d. Council of Trent

APPENDIX II

Content-Assessment Questions from the Post-Exam

Matching Questions:

Word Bank

Charles V	Henry VIII	Predestination	Desiderius Erasmus	Anabaptists
Indulgence	John Calvin	Peace of Augsburg	Martin Luther	Ulrich Zwingli

1. _____ Best known of all the Christian humanists, wrote satire against the church
2. _____ Made Martin Luther an outlaw in the Holy Roman Empire
3. _____ Belief that God determined in advance who would be saved and who would be damned
4. _____ Established the Church of England in 1534
5. _____ Allowed the various German states to follow either Catholicism or Lutheranism
6. _____ Regarded as dangerous radicals by the Protestants and Catholics
7. _____ A release from all or part of the punishment for sin
8. _____ Began the Protestant Reformation
9. _____ Introduced Protestant reforms in Zürich, Switzerland
10. _____ Published the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

Multiple Choice Questions:

11. Christian humanists believed that
 - a. if people read the classics, especially the basic works of Christianity, they would become more pious
 - b. by studying biology, one could assure one's salvation
 - c. God did not intend man to know more than what was written in the Bible
 - d. society should return to simpler ways and not focus on gaining wealth and material possessions
12. _____ was the first Protestant faith.
 - a. Calvinism
 - b. Zoroastrianism
 - c. Christian humanism
 - d. Lutheranism
13. The publication of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses
 - a. was seen as a threat by local businesses
 - b. attacked the abuses in the sale of indulgences, beginning the Protestant Reformation
 - c. was largely ignored until decades after Luther's death
 - d. became the central text for Anglicanism
14. Calvinists agreed with Lutherans on most important doctrines except
 - a. who spoke better German
 - b. the leadership of the Catholic Church
 - c. predestination
 - d. the sale of indulgences

15. The final decrees of the Council of Trent
 - a. reaffirmed traditional Catholic teachings in opposition to Protestant beliefs
 - b. empowered the Jesuits to find and try heretics, including anyone who was Protestant
 - c. stated that Christians should be nice people
 - d. were ultimately meaningless, since they were never put into practice.
16. The inventor of the moveable-type printing press was
 - a. Johannes Tetzel
 - b. Ulrich Zwingli
 - c. Johannes Gutenberg
 - d. John Calvin
17. In defiance of the Catholic Church, _____ translated the Bible from Latin into German.
 - a. Desiderius Erasmus
 - b. Martin Luther
 - c. Johannes Tetzel
 - d. Johannes Gutenberg
18. Which of the following became the chief teaching of the Protestant Reformation?
 - a. Transubstantiation
 - b. The Seven Sacraments
 - c. Justification through Faith Alone
 - d. Infallibility of the Pope
19. _____ successfully created a Protestant church government in Geneva, Switzerland.
 - a. Henry VIII
 - b. John Calvin
 - c. Ulrich Zwingli
 - d. Martin Luther
20. Missionaries from which religious order used education to support the Catholic Church?
 - a. Jesuits
 - b. Anabaptists
 - c. Anglicans
 - d. Calvinists

Short Answer Questions:

21. Define - Transubstantiation
22. Explain - the Importance of the Printing Press
23. Identify - Johannes Tetzel
24. List two examples of abuses or worldliness the Roman Catholic Church was charged with.
25. Identify - the Edict of Worms
26. Define - Infallibility of the Pope
27. Identify - Ignatius de Loyola
28. Define - Anglicanism
29. List two of the Seven Sacraments within the Roman Catholic Church.
30. Define - Purgatory

Reflection

My Honors Thesis represents a blending of my various programs of study. Theatre, History, and Education – I drew upon all of them in the creation and implementation of this project. As a future educator, I wanted to determine effective styles of teaching, especially from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Having been exposed to the integration of drama-based teaching strategies into the non-arts curriculum during my studies, I decided to put these methods to the test. As such, my thesis project created and tested in the classroom a unit design that drew equally upon history and drama content.

This project gave me a firsthand opportunity to apply the various skills I had been learning in my classes. In my programs, I had been exposed to much theory, but here I was able to make use of all that in a real-world context, complete with having to satisfy numerous external requirements imposed by my advisor, the university IRB, the cooperating classroom teacher, the school district, and more. In that regard, it really was an eye-opening experience. Balancing the ideal methods of approaching curriculum with the administrative needs of the classroom is far from an easy task. It requires a lot of flexibility and compromise, skills that will be expected of me as a professional teacher.

As can be expected, I faced a series of difficulties in completing this project. Repeatedly, the biggest hurdle I encountered was finding local high school teachers willing to work with me. The value of networking shone during this stage, as ultimately every teacher who agreed to participate in the project was someone that I had a preexisting relationship with from earlier classwork. Once I had teachers onboard, arranging the project became another challenge. Naturally, every teacher has planned in their curriculum what and how they want to teach, as well as how much time they want to spend on a particular topic. Combining those needs with my own for the purposes of the research proved to be quite a dance. Again, this was a good experience for me, as it served as a window into the life of a practicing teacher faced with the demands of prioritizing curriculum.

Creating the lesson plans was truly a test of my training. I had to draw on all everything I had learned from my methods of teaching classes and my content classes, synthesizing them in a way that would create a truly cross-disciplinary experience for the students. This was not at all easy or simple. Many times I really had to stretch my brain to develop a dramatic activity that would effectively teach and assess the historical content knowledge. Often the solution would be completely outside of the box, testing my creativity as an artist as much as my skills as an educator. All told, I probably put more hours into this portion of the project than any other.

The act of implementing the study was truly a trial by fire experience. It was the first time that I had been placed in charge of teaching an entire unit of a history course in multiple classrooms. In many

ways, I consider this experience to have been one of the most valuable parts of this project for me personally. I had the opportunity to put my plans and ideas to the test, to see what truly worked and what did not. Taking on the role of teacher in addition to researcher, I found myself confronted with all sorts of challenges in the form of classroom management, student conflict, and lesson execution. My training had prepared me for many of these experiences; however, no amount of theoretical study can substitute for the hands-on experience of the crazy and unexpected things that happen in the real classroom. Looking back on that portion of this project, I believe the experience was one of my most effective preparations for student teaching.

The research component of this project was largely new ground for me. When I began, I had no prior experience in conducting such an extensive project. I cannot begin to describe how valuable seeing the entire process through, from start to finish, was for me. I have gained much in the way of understanding the process of proposing projects, working with IRBs, applying for grants and other funding, and more. To be honest, I still find all of this rather daunting, but now that I have done it, I feel much more capable of doing it all again for future projects that I may conduct. At the very least, I now find myself competent at reading and analyzing the work done by other researchers, which is a valuable skill in its own right. I am glad that I now have the ability to decipher research in my field, assess their data and arguments myself, and apply their findings to my experiences and work. This will only help me in the future to remain a dynamic teacher and life-long learner.

Beyond the personal benefits that my research activity has brought me, I am proud of my contributions to my field. As a professional educator, I will be continually questioned about the value of my subjects, the best methods to employ, and various efforts to promote cross-disciplinary learning and student achievement. My work with my thesis has provided me with a large body of literature that I can cite, including now my own work. I have personally contributed to the discussions on promoting drama integration and how to approach teaching the social studies. I believe that my work supports the value of including the arts across the curriculum and provides an example to future educators of successful approaches to implementing such a program. The experiences that I have had presenting my work at past American Alliance for Theatre and Education National Conferences in Denver and Boston, as well as the upcoming conference in New Orleans, have shown me that my work truly matters in the national conversation. I am well prepared to help influence the direction taken by educational practice in the coming years.

Author's Bio

Colin Anderson is graduating from USU with a double major in Theatre Education and History Education with a minor in Spanish. Colin recently completed his Student Teaching experience at Logan High School and is excited to now be venturing into the real world in search of a classroom of his own. During his time at Utah State, Colin's research accomplishments include presenting on his "Teaching Social Studies through Drama" thesis project at the 2016 American Alliance of Theatre and Education National Conference in Boston, and he will do so again this summer at the 2017 conference in New Orleans. Colin has worked on numerous theatre productions at USU and in the community, of which he is most proud of his role as the director of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* at the Brigham City Fine Arts Center. A few of Colin's other favorite memories of USU include studying abroad in Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom; and hand-building a replica 1805 empire-waisted dress, which was part of a presentation at the 2016 United States Institute for Theatre Technology National Conference. When not working in the theatre or classroom, Colin enjoys hiking in the great outdoors, playing board games with friends, and working on several science-fiction and fantasy novels he has in progress.